



Please pass this to a neighbor.

A newsletter of the
Wallace Woods Neighborhood Association

June 2010

WWNA ready to move Owl online

The Owl is headed online, perhaps as early as fall. At least that's the plan.

For years the Wallace Woods Neighborhood Association has relied upon this newsletter to keep residents informed about street projects, kids available for odd jobs and whether to bring a side dish or a dessert to the Corn Roast. But paper newsletters are fighting an uphill battle as homes increasingly turn to the Internet for information, and this neighborhood is no exception.

The main advantage of transforming the paper Owl into an interactive website/blog (think of it as a neighborhood bulletin board) is timeliness. The Owl is mailed to WWNA members six times a year — around the first of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December. That means news stories and photos sometimes languish for weeks

before the next edition of the Owl is printed and mailed. Or stories aren't even covered because of when the event falls in the production cycle. This was the case with the grand opening of Providence Pavilion. The nursing home's open house on Jan. 27 at the former St. Elizabeth North was too late to make it into the February Owl and the event was old news by April.

An interactive website, on the other hand, could be updated as often as several times a week. An online Owl would become less of a newspaper and more of a community forum. Reports from committee chairs, stories, photos and perhaps even videos could go online soon after an event or monthly meeting. So could the recording secretary's minutes, the president's report and the treasurer's report. A calendar would let residents know at a glance the time-date-place of upcoming events.

The past three WWNA presidents — Kerry Risner, Marshall Slagle and Chris Gastright — have increasingly turned to e-mail communication to keep members informed about important issues. E-mail also has become the preferred method for WWNA members to share information. Indeed, earlier this year, some 25 WWNA members felt compelled to submit an e-mail to news07@wallacewoods.org to express an opinion for or against moving the annual Progressive Dinner out of the neighborhood. Not one person wrote a letter or sent an e-mail to the Owl. Nor have they for the past nine months.

The Owl is labor-intensive for those who produce it. Expense is also a factor. Each Owl costs about \$1.07 to print and mail. Six mailings with an average press run of 110 copies means the WWNA pays more than

\$700 a year to distribute this newsletter. An interactive website would be cheaper to maintain. That's one of the questions that an exploratory committee will consider.

The goal is to get the online Owl up and running by fall. Then, in the weeks to follow, the website could be tweaked to meet the information demands of the neighborhood.

NO E-MAIL? LET US KNOW

One concern of moving the Owl online is that a few WWNA members may not have Internet access. If you fall into this category, please send a note to The Owl, P.O. Box 15662, Covington KY 41015-0662. Include your name and address. One idea under consideration is to print out the web pages from time to time and deliver them to those without Internet access.

NEIGHBORHOOD HAPPENINGS: *Pie and Cake Auction will be July 17*

The annual Pie and Cake Auction will take place Saturday, July 17, at the home of Gabe and Briana Smith, 223 Sterrett. Carol Gastright is the event chair. Starting time and other details will be firmed up by e-mail.

The format will be the same as in past years: The neighborhood association will provide meat and beverages; those attending are asked to bring a side dish to share. The auction will take place after the meal. If you wish, bring a dessert to be auctioned off, but also remember that buyers are needed, too. Proceeds benefit WWNA projects.

JUNE MEMBERSHIP MEETING: *Please join us at 7 pm Monday, June 7, at home of Briana and Gabe Smith, 223 Sterrett Avenue.*



Visit us at wallacewoods.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Chris Gastright

Hello everyone and thank you for all your help through the first months of my WWNA presidency. I really appreciate everything you have done. I hope the remainder of the year goes as well.

It is important in a volunteer organization like ours to present a consistent public presence to the rest of the city, so that no matter the level of participation there is always someone to continue various projects we have begun. By assuming the presidency in the middle of the year I found myself in the midst of several of them, for example, the Route 17 project. The project has reached the point where a permanent barrier at 20th and Scott is on the horizon. To this end John Vissman and I met with Mike Yeager of the city engineering office to discuss the nature of the barrier. Obviously, since it is traffic related, there are many state and local regulations which must be obeyed, so it is safe to assume the final product will not be exactly what we want. However, if we are determined we can at least have something that adds a little character to our northern gateway.

The city will install only the traffic engineering related components, curbs, ramps, drains, etc. It falls to us to provide the landscaping. The meeting produced a rough schematic for plantings and signage but the final version will have to wait on the engineering drawings being made available. There is no timeline at this point for completion of the project, but I think next spring we will be planting.

Volunteering your time to the WWNA might seem daunting to newcomers, but I encourage you to give it a try. There are other projects out there that need attention lest they be forgotten, and that attention can only come from our community. I hope you are willing to give it a try.

NEIGHBORHOOD HAPPENINGS:

Annual Yard Sale is Saturday

A reminder that our annual yard sale – Covington's largest – takes place Saturday, June 5. Official hours are 9 am to 3 pm, but some sellers will be setting up earlier. The neighborhood association has obtained the necessary city permit. Cost to participate is \$5 per house. WWNA representatives will collect the fee during the morning of the sale. Fee proceeds help defray advertising costs and also benefit other neighborhood projects.

Board addresses Rose Garden conditions

The Covington Board of Adjustment on May 19 agreed to minor revisions in conditions placed on the Franciscan nuns who run the Rose Garden Home Mission at 2040 Madison Ave. The action came after the Wallace Woods Neighborhood Association on May 3 voted to oppose expanded distribution of food at the center over concerns that the nuns' mission could turn into a soup kitchen for the homeless and negatively impact our neighborhood.

The Board of Adjustment reiterated that occasional distribution of food not prepared on-site is OK, but cautioned again that "this particular operation not morph into a parish kitchen." Another change allows the nuns to distribute non-prescription medications such as ibuprofen, but a ban on dispensing prescription drugs remains in effect. The board also refused to consider whether student interns could spend the night at the center, reinforcing its previous order that the site not be used as an overnight homeless shelter.

More revisions could come about because the nuns have filed an appeal in Kenton County Circuit Court alleging that the written order resulting from the March 17 Board of Adjustment hearing didn't reflect the intent of the board. In other words, what services the nuns can or can't provide soon may become a matter for lawyers and judges.

The nuns moved into the former Rother's Hospital Equipment site in February from a building at 18th and Madison. The mission was established to offer pregnancy counseling and services espousing Roman Catholic principles, but the scope of the mission has since expanded.

WWNA NEWS: *Jeff Sewell named VP*

The WWNA board in May approved the appointment of Jeff Sewell, 106 Wallace Ave., as the new neighborhood association vice president. He fills the vacancy created when Chris Gastright moved up to the president's chair after Marshall Slagle stepped down in March. Jeff will serve as VP until a new slate of officers is elected at the Corn Roast in September. Also, Opie Daugherty resigned his position as at-large representative.

Do you have a story or news item for the Owl? E-mail jascbs@yahoo.com.



Visit us at wallacewoods.org

The right to build a backyard fire

By Chris Gastright

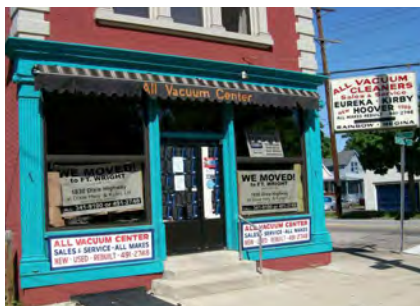
Wallace Woods is a unique community because we came to exist through the efforts of neighbors working together, not by a public promotion or developers advertising. Our residents have worked tirelessly since the '60s to improve the neighborhood, recruit new neighbors, and promote an enjoyable lifestyle in an urban suburb. Enjoyment of the unique nature of our community has always been and should always be paramount in the efforts of the WWNA. Our location, large lots, quiet streets and historic housing are a rare combination and afford us a chance to enjoy living a little of both the "Gentleman Farmer & City Folk" lifestyle. It has worked well for more than 40 years.

Recently, however, we have noticed some encroachment on our traditional activities from new laws which have unintended consequences. Namely, the fact that we are not currently allowed by law to have a backyard fire. As I was growing up we always had a fire pit next to the wood fort my parents built behind the pool. Our summer tradition was to camp out in the back yard and roast hot dogs and marshmallows on the fire. To me there was almost nothing that represented a better picture of Wallace Woods. Here we were, just a mile from a large urban environment, yet still able to do all the things with our kids in our yards that you would expect much farther out in the country. It was a wonderful way to grow up.

Sharing that with our children has become more difficult. Covington has a "Nuisance Law" which allows the police and fire departments to control various public nuisances. The backyard fire pit has run afoul of this law. Several of our neighbors, myself included, have had visits from the Fire Department in our yards and were required to extinguish our fires. For us personally it happened during our annual pool party for the 5th grade students of 6th District and was a huge disappointment to the kids.

Our experience with the consequences of the nuisance law has drawn the attention of our city commissioners, namely Sherry Carran, who has attended some of our neighborhood meetings. Sherry took the issue to the commission and it is currently being reviewed. The Fire Department supports a clarification of the law so we are hopeful that our right to an evening of sitting by the fire will soon be a protected activity.

We should learn from this experience and remember that our lifestyle here in Wallace Woods is worth protecting. A lifetime of hard work has gone into our community, and it would be unconscionable to let it slip away.



In case you haven't noticed, the neighborhood lost another retail business when the All Vacuum Center closed after 34 years at 20th and Greenup. The building is now for sale. All Vacuum relocated to Dixie Highway and Kyles Lane in Ft. Wright. All Vacuum also has a store in Crescent Springs.

PATRONIZE OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Bank of Kentucky • Madison Avenue • (859) 581-6400
Better Business Guide • Florence, KY • (859) 491-5438
Big Bob's Carpet • Latonia • (859) 261-8000
Dirty Feet Pet Care • Covington, Ky • (859) 816-9273
Dixie Chili • Madison Avenue • (859) 431-7444
EducatingNotBabysitting.com • (859) 816-0076
Jackie Adams • Licensed Massage Therapist • (859) 581-6226
U-Save Auto Rental • (859) 283-5555 Crittenden
(859) 428-1506 Florence
Yankee Doodle Deli • Covington • (859) 620-7406

MEMBERSHIP FORM (Please indicate information that may be published in the neighborhood directory, by checking boxes to left.)

____ Yes, I would like to join Wallace Woods Neighborhood Association ____ Individual \$10 ____ Family \$15 ____ Business \$20

☐ Name: _____

☐ Address: _____

☐ Phone: _____

☐ E-mail: _____

☐ I do not authorize any personal information to appear in the neighborhood directory

☐ Send me The Owl via email only. Join the email group through the website at wallacewoods.org

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return form and make checks payable to: WWNA • Treasurer • P.O. Box 15662 • Covington, KY 41015-0662



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Wallace Woods Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 15662
Covington, KY 41015-0662

Chris Gastright, President • (859) 393-6104

Jeff Sewell, Vice President • (859) 665-9640

Lynn Ryker, Treasurer • (859) 491-0099

Mike Hassan, Secretary • (859) 291-9453

Jim Young, Secretary • (859) 581-4470

Ella Frye, At Large • (859) 491-5122

Kerry Risner, At Large • (859) 431-2955

Visit us at wallacewoods.org

NEIGHBORHOOD HAPPENINGS: *Citizens Academy informative, eye-opening*

Four Wallace Woods residents recently completed the Covington Police Department Citizens Academy. Beth Sewell, John Vissman, Kerry Risner and JoAnn Connor started the eight-week course in February. "I learned a ton," said Beth. John agreed: "I am now better informed on how the CPD functions and all the things that go into an officer doing his or her job."

The Citizens Academy is open to any Covington resident and covers a wide range of topics including polygraph testing, patrolling, CSI and narcotics. Both Beth and John found the school resource officer training to be the most interesting and informative. "It's amazing what all they do and their involvement in the kids' lives," said Beth. She also was impressed at the "open communications" in both directions throughout the training, as Covington police sought the opinions and experiences of residents.

Kerry Risner participated in a ride-along with a second-shift officer. "I got to see the officers in action and how they conduct stops, arrests, searches and surveillance. I intended to stay for 4 hours but ended up doing the complete shift. It was fascinating."

All four endorse attending the academy and agree that the experience is worthwhile to better understand how our police department functions and to build relationships with the officers. The Citizens Academy will be offered again in the fall.

Right: Beth Sewell, left; Kerry Risner and John Vissman display their graduation certificates after completing the eight-week Covington Police Department Citizens Academy.



CHECK OUT CRIMEREPORTS.COM

A story in The Enquirer on May 21 publicized the Covington Police Department's new online database system for educating the public on crime trends. Log on to crimereports.com and then type in your address and ZIP code. The site offers detailed information on crimes in Covington neighborhoods, and also lists the locations of registered sex offenders. It's a highly useful tool. Check out the site, then bookmark it.